Futures Notes
First Meeting
What have been the notable successes... and failures... of the past decade?
When have things gone well... and why?
What institutions have really achieved leadership?
What is the difference between universities in different parts of the world...
America vs. Europe vs. Asia
Futuring
Karl Weick suggests that perhaps we should read some compelling science fiction scenarios of the 21st Century... perhaps Eric Rabkin or John Boyd could help... also focus on films
Dan Atkins suggests the use of videos... knowledge navigator
Problems in brainstorming
At every stage the best ideas tend to get diluted.
Notes the experience of the LSA Undergraduate Committee... suffers from too much democracy
There is a blocking process which seems to occur
Karl Weick notes that studies indicate that outsiders always bring in the best ideas... not succession through the ranks.
There are a few examples of forcing renewal from within, but these are rare. (Recall Engineering and Bus Ad experiences.)
Knowledge-based organizations
In organizations, just like computers, now find peer-to-peer structures...
... in some groups you're a leader... in others you're a follower... in still others, an observer
Skunkworks
We need to set up a counterpart of the Lockheed Skunkworks in education
Perhaps give folks a term to do something different... to prototype something
Dan Atkins mentioned the old idea of a "Dean's Department"
UM Challenges
Bob Weisbuch: LSA is a mall... departments are stores... LSA administration sets the hours... students are shoppers...
LSA is not an intellectual entity... it is a place you go to lobby for $$$
Weisbuch believes some kind of divisional structure is necessary... perhaps with a 4th division to take responsibility for the first two years
Graduate education needs to be seriously re-examined.
Do we have too many graduate students? Probably.
We need to broaden our concept of teaching beyond instruction... perhaps moving away from solitary to collective learning experiences
Perhaps we need distinguish the changing nature of the public research university. The public thinks they are buying a teaching university.
The largest group of UM-Dearborn transfer students from other four-year institutions are from UMAA!